

The Rev. Erasmus Darwin McMaster came to the Presidency from Ballstown, New York, during the summer recess of 1838. Dr. Crowe seems to have had Dr. McMaster in mind when his attention was attracted to Mr. McAuley, and negotiations were begun immediately upon the deposition of the latter.

While it is difficult for the loyal partisan of Hanover to forgive the dramatic removal of the College to Madison and the almost comical denouement of the paper Madison University, the candid reader of the Crowe manuscript and of the record of the Board of Trustees must credit President McMaster with the possession of a high degree of administrative ability. The feelings of both parties to this episode, which will be related in a subsequent chapter, ran so high that they ~~that~~ overlooked the masterly rescue of the institution from a muddle of its financial affairs that seemed hopeless. One must admire Dr. Crowe's fairness in telling of this rescue, and of the successful reorganization of the College by the President, before he enters upon the vitriolic account of what Crowe calls the destruction of the College. Dr. Crowe speaks of having regarded President McMaster up to this time as its greatest benefactor. One must wonder what might have been the outcome if the President had not gone to Madison, or if Dr. Crowe had gone with him. In either event we should have a very different story to tell at this centennial. It is recorded that upon his arrival at Hanover, Dr. McMaster immediately commenced an investigation of the condition of the College with the view of devising ways and means to promote its prosperity. His first suggestion was the establishment of a law school in connection with the College, somewhat to fill the place left by the failure of the trade schools, and to bring the College into closer contact with the practical affairs of that day. The law school was established at the first meeting of the Board, and Judge Jeremiah Eggleston of Madison took to the single professorship. This action together with the theological seminary and the trade school ventures is pertinent to recent discussion of the question whether the creation of a department of education involves the introduction of a foreign policy into the administration of the College. The law school was abandoned two years later when Judge Eggleston was compelled by the state of his health to retire. The new president's second proposal was the adoption of the "scholarship" plan of raising endowment funds. The scheme involved the granting of free tuition or other privileges "forever" in proportion to the sum given, to the appointees of donors of amounts ranging from \$400 to \$1,000. "The right of appointing the incumbent of the \$1,000 scholarship, is vested in the subscriber, his heirs, or assigns forever." The system was adopted, and in later years was the cause of endless and perplexing embarrassments. The paltry income



received from the investment of these scholarships, in many cases of which the principal was never paid in, an interest-bearing subscription note being substituted for cash, did not at all approximate the per capita cost of instruction, not the tuition fees paid by those who were so unfortunate as to fail to procure the use of a scholarship. At one time there were more students on scholarships than were paying the advertised tuition charges. Besides, there was more or less haggling over the use of these privileges, which created an atmosphere of hostile feeling. At last, years later, the Trustees got rid of the situation which had developed, by the somewhat dubious method of making "tuition free to all students" and creating a contingent or "term fee" payable by all students. President McMaster also planned a system of bookkeeping and safeguarding of funds which put an end to some of the loose practices into which the College had fallen, and also effected the sales of property and other adjustments by means of which he paid off most of the debts which had well nigh strangled the institution. He also arranged and amicable adjustment of the contentions between the College and the former theological department over the division of funds which had been improperly merged, although it appears now that he was entirely too generous in his concessions to the New Albany institution.

Dr. McMaster seems to have been equally successful with the internal management of the college, with the effort to secure the support of the church, and with the development of an esprit de corps. In the move to create a university at Madison which would become "the leading institution for the whole central and lower part of the Ohio Valley," he worked himself out of the office which he was filling with great distinction. A little later he was called to the presidency of ~~Mx~~ Miami University.

pp. 59-62

Small portrait

facing p. 84

Under the chapter "Hanover and Indiana" the surrender of the charter of Hanover College, the removal of the President and faculty to Madison, and the subsequent return to Hanover is related.

Dr. McMaster's genius for reorganization was felt by the curriculum.

p. 160



1827

McMASTER, ERASMUS DARWIN(3) Hist. of Hanover College  
Millis

One is impressed with the scope, balance and scholarly character of the McMaster course of study, and not a little surprised that the Faculty of the reorganized institution after the failure of the Madison enterprise, should return to the curriculum of 1832 with the slight revisions of 1836. The curriculum of 1854 under the leadership of President Thomas, approached the level of the McMaster course of study, but not its scope, nor its provisions for contact with current world movements.

pp. 163

Dr. McMaster was president of Hanover College: 1838-1843.

FROM:-The History of Hanover College  
from  
1827 to 1927  
William Alfred Millis  
Hanover College  
1927



CLASS OF 1827

E. D? McMASTER

In 1838 became the president of Hanover College,  
Ind;

In 1845, President of Miami University, Oxford, O;

In 1850, Professor on the Presbyterian Theological  
Seminary at New Albany, Ind.; and at the time of his  
death, in 1866, was at the head of the Presbyterian  
Theological Seminary in Chicago, Ill.

Spent his boyhood days in Duaneburgh and was a  
member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church there.

History of the County of Schenectady p. 178

Howell & Munsell

W. W. Munsell & Co.

New York 1886.



CLASS OF 1827

ERASMUS D. MAC MASTER

1827

Erasmus D. McMaster, D.D., LL. D.—Pres. of Hanover College, Ind.

C. Feb. 1887.

\*One of them, the Rev. ERASMUS D. MACMASTER, D.D., has died since this sketch was written. He was born in Mercer, Pa., in February, 1806; was graduated at Union College, Schenectady, in 1827; studied Theology under the direction of his father; was licensed to preach in the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1829, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in the Presbyterian Church in February, 1831, when he became Pastor of the Ballston (N. Y.) Presbyterian Church. Here he continued, an eminently faithful and acceptable Minister, until 1838, when the great interest which he felt in the cause of Western Education, led him to resign his charge and accept the Presidency of the College at Hanover, Ind. This office he held until 1845, when, in consequence of some unexpected embarrassments in connection with the College, he resigned his place and accepted the Presidency of Miami University, Oxford, O. After more than four years of intense and complicated labour in this institution, he reluctantly accepted a call to the Professorship of Systematic Theology in the Seminary at New Albany, Ind. After a few years this Seminary, owing to various unpropitious circumstances, ceased to exist, and in place of it came two others,—one at Danville, Ky., and one at Chicago, Ill. To the Professorship of Theology in this latter institution he was appointed by the General Assembly of 1866. He was inaugurated in September of that year, and entered upon his labours with great zeal and fidelity, and with every prospect of the best success; but before the close of the year his earthly course was finished. He died in perfect peace, after a brief illness, on the 11th of December. He possessed a massive intellect,—clear, acute, powerful; an unwavering fidelity to his own convictions of right; a kindly and benevolent spirit, and an earnest and devoted piety. In any community in which his lot might have been cast he would have been a man of mark.

FROM Annals of the American Pulpit

1827

A sketch of the life of ERASMUS D. MacMASTER appears in the Annals of the American Pulpit, Vol. 9.

Rev. ERASMUS D. McMaster, 1827, of Duanesburgh, N.Y., was a member of the Adelpbic Society.  
(Died: 1866)  
Adelpbic Catalogue 1830



1827 Erastus D. McMaster, brother of Algernon and James '39.  
Son of Gilbert McMaster, of Duaneburgh, who received an  
honorary M. A. in 1815 and D. D. in 1828.

See father's folder in honorary file.

Presbyterial authority, and require him to yield his scruples and prepare to enter  
the ministry. In this decision he recognized the voice of Providence; and, as  
his studies had always had a special direction to the various branches of theological  
learning, after passing the customary parts of trial, he was, in October, 1807,  
licensed to preach the Gospel. Having declined some other calls, he was  
ordained to the work of the ministry in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and  
settled as Pastor of the Congregation in Duaneburgh, N. Y., on the 8th of  
August, 1808.

From his settlement at Duaneburgh he continued to minister to that church  
for a period of nearly thirty-two years; holding a distinguished position in his  
own community and in the friendly and respectful regards of other denominations,  
building up a large and flourishing congregation, and exerting a benign and  
powerful influence over the region. In 1828 he was honoured with the degree of  
Doctor of Divinity from Union College. In 1840 he accepted a call from the  
church in Princeton, Ind., and removed to that place, leaving his former charge.  
For what appeared to him sufficient reasons amidst the universal and strong

Office of the American Bible Society

1840



Rec<sup>d</sup>, May 22

1827

New Albany, May, 17<sup>th</sup> 55.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your Circular, I send you some short notes of the leading incidents of my Father's life. A publication of some of his writings, with a memoir, is contemplated, which will be sent for your collections, when issued. I forward by mail a small volume made up of various pamphlets.

I also send you a few short notes of <sup>some incidents in</sup> my own unimportant career; understanding that you seek such notes of all the graduates of Union College. By addressing a circular to Rev. A. S. MacMaster, Poland, Ohio, you may obtain notes of another graduate of 1827.

I am very respectfully,

E. D. MacMaster

Prof, Pearson, Union College



1827

May. 22. 1833-

- I. Name - Erasmus D. Mac Master.
- II. Parents - Gilbert and Jane (Brown) Mac Master.
- III. Birth Place - Mercer, Pennsylvania; - Feb. 4, 1806.
- IV. Residences - Ballston, N.Y. 1831-1838. - Hanover College, Jeff. Co. Indiana, 1838-44. Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 1845-49. - New Albany, Ind. 1849 to present time (1855).
- V. Prepared for College - By his father, Gilbert Mac Master, D.D., Oneanesburgh, N.Y. 1818-24.
- VI. Graduated - At Union College, in 1827.
- VII. Occupation after graduation - Study, and teaching at Cortland Village and Coxsackie, N.Y. 1827-8.
- VIII. Profession studied; at Oneanesburgh, N.Y. with his father, Gilbert Mac Master, D.D., 1828-31.
- IX. Profession exercised - Theology - Presbyterian Church, Ballston, N.Y. 1831-8. - Hanover College, 1838-44. Miami Univ. 1845-49. New Albany Theol. Seminary, 1849 - to present time (1855).
- X. -



6011.52.1014  
xi. Offices held - Pastor Presb. Church, Ballston,  
N.Y. 1831-38. - President of Hanover College, Indi-  
ana, 1838-44. - President of Miami University,  
Ohio, 1845-49. - Professor of Theology in the  
New Albany Theological Seminary, (Presb.)  
1849 to the present time, (1855.).

xii. Literary Writings. - Five Academic Ad-  
-dresses; viz. Inaugural at Hanover College; Inaug-  
-ural at Miami University; Two Baccalaureate  
Addresses; Address on Resigning Presidency of  
Miami University; Three Pamphlets on Edu-  
-cational Affairs; Three Occasional Sermons.

xiii. Literary and Honorary Titles.

From Union College, A.B. 1827. A.M. 1830. D.D. 1841.



ERASMUS DARWIN McMASTER

Son of Rev. Dr. Gilbert and Jane (Brown) McMaster, was born in Mercer, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, February 4, 1806.

In 1808, his parents removed to Duanesburgh, New York, where he was carefully trained in religious duties and literary studies by his father, graduating from Union College in 1827.

He studied theology under the care of his father, was licensed by the Northern Presbytery, June 16, 1829, and preached in the vacancies a year. He connected with the Presbyterian Church, being received by the Albany Presbytery, October 18, 1830. He was ordained by the same Presbytery, installed pastor of the congregation of Ballston, N. Y., February 13, 1831, and resigned this charge, April 24, 1838. This was his only pastoral charge.

He was inaugurated President of Hanover College, Indiana, November 7, 1838, where he continued in office for six years. He was inaugurated President of Miami University, Ohio, August 13, 1845, and resigned August 9, 1849. The same fall he accepted the professorship of Systematic Theology in the Presbyterian Seminary of New Albany, Indiana, and was forced to abandon the office in 1858, because he was in favor of the abolition of human slavery, which system the Presbyterian Church heartily endorsed. It was in the General Assembly which met in Indianapolis, May 30, 1859, that he made the celebrated speech on the motion to postpone the election of Professors of Theology in the Chicago Seminary, because this question of slavery was agitating the minds of the public, and the Assembly had not the courage to come out in favor of abolition. For several years he had lived in comparative retirement at Monticello, Indiana. He removed to the home of his brother, the Rev. A. S. McMaster, D. D., in Poland, Ohio, where he resided three years. In the spring of 1866, he was unanimously elected professor of Systematic Theology in the North West Seminary, of Chicago, Ills., where he was inaugurated with great demonstration, September 10, 1866. Soon afterwards he was prostrated with a severe attack of pneumonia, from which he died very suddenly, in Chicago, Illinois, December 10, 1866, and was buried, near Xenia, Ohio. He never married. He was confessedly one of the great men of the Presbyterian Church in America. Endowed by nature with the noblest powers of intellect, blessed with the greatest advantage of receiving a thorough education, and early possessed with the grace of the Holy Spirit, he was enabled at an early period of his life to take a high position in the Church. As a scholar, theologian and preacher, he was of the first rank. He never forgot his early training in the Covenanter Church, and frequently made reference to the principles of that Church as the guide of his actions. He was a life-long and consistent opponent of the whole system of human slavery, and, for the holding of this high position, frequently brought odium upon himself. His rare powers, profound humility, independence of thought, convictions of right, affectionate sympathy and Christian philanthropy, marked him as one of the noblest



CLASS OF 1827--Erasmus Darwin McMaster

servants of God. He was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Union College in 1841, and that of Doctor of Laws by Miami University in 1864.

Reformed  
FROM History of the Presbyterian Church in America

W. Melancthon Glasgow

Hill & Harvey

1888.



# ERASMUS DARWIN McMASTER.

1827

Erasmus Darwin McMaster, second president of Hanover College (1838-44), was born at Mercer Village, Mercer Co., Pa., Feb. 4, 1806. His collegiate course was taken at Union College, N.Y., whence he was graduated in 1827. He studied theology under his father, Rev. Dr. Gilbert McMaster (q.v.), and was licensed by the northern presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian church, June 16, 1829. Having transferred his church relations, he was ordained by the presbytery of Albany, and installed in 1831 as pastor of the church at Ballston, N.Y., where he remained until called to the presidency of Hanover in 1838. For the previous two years, Dr. Matthews of the theological department had acted as president, and his administration was a constant struggle with difficulties and disasters. In 1837 a tornado which swept over the place left the principal college edifice in ruins. The buildings were repaired, however, and debts canceled, and though the institution was in feeble condition, without any endowment, it was strengthening for future growth when it came under Dr. McMaster's control. The latter was one of the strongest men in the Presbyterian church of his day. He was a true Christian gentleman, characterized by profound humility and a loving sympathy for all men. He had manly independence of thought, but along with it a broad and generous charity which never failed. The college grew rapidly under his presidency. Funds were secured, the number of students largely increased, and the curriculum enlarged and improved. In 1843 Dr. McMaster conceived the idea of removing the college to the neighboring city of Madison, then one of the most important and wealthy business places in the state. He thought that if the institution was established there, the wealthy men of the city would rally to its support, and build up the leading university in the West. Acting upon this idea he persuaded the board of trustees at a called meeting to surrender their charter to the legislature in return for the charter of a university at Madison. The old charter was given up, the new charter granted, and the college was removed to Madison. If all the friends of Hanover had rallied to the support of the new institution, Dr. McMaster's idea of building up the leading university of the West might have been realized. This, however, they refused to do. The college was divided -- board, faculty and students -- a part going with President McMaster to Madison, and part remaining with Vice-President Crowe at Hanover. The academy at Hanover under Dr. Crowe grew and prospered, and many of the students who had followed Dr. McMaster to Madison returned. In 1844 Madison University was offered to the synod as a synodical college, but the offer was declined, the synod ordering the continuance of its college at Hanover. A new charter was obtained far more favorable than the one which had been surrendered, granting the powers of a university, and placing the institution fully under the control of the synod of Indiana. After leaving Hanover in 1844 Dr. McMaster was president of Madison University one year, after which he served as president of Miami University, Oxford, O., 1845-49. He was professor of systematic theology in the Theological Seminary at New Albany, Ind., 1849-57, and professor of systematic theology in the Northwestern Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill., from June to December, 1866. He died at Chicago, Ill., Dec. 10, 1866.



**McMAHON, Laurence Stephen**, R. C. bishop, b. in Nova Scotia, 24 Dec., 1835. He was removed to the United States while an infant. After studying in Boston, Worcester, Mass., Baltimore, Md., and Montreal, Canada, he went abroad, and received his theological education in Aix and in Rome. He was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1860, and, returning to the United States, was first stationed at the cathedral in Boston, Mass. In 1863 he became chaplain of the 28th Massachusetts regiment, and after the war he was pastor in Bridgeport, Conn., and subsequently in New Bedford, Mass., where he built the church of St. Lawrence and a hospital under the charge of the Sisters of Mercy. He was vicar-general of the see of Providence in 1872-'9, and at the latter date was consecrated bishop of Hartford, Conn. He received the degree of D. D. from Rome in 1872.

**McMAHON, Martin Thomas**, soldier, b. in L'Annapolis, Canada, 21 March, 1838. He was graduated at St. John's college, Fordham, N. Y., in 1855, and subsequently studied law. For a time he was special post-office agent for the Pacific coast, and also served as Indian agent, but at the beginning of the civil war he volunteered and was made captain, becoming aide-de-camp to Gen. George B. McClellan. In 1862 he was appointed adjutant-general and chief of staff of the 6th corps of the Army of the Potomac, under Gen. William B. Franklin, serving also under Gens. John Sedgwick and Horatio G. Wright until after the final operations before Petersburg. He resigned in 1866, after receiving the brevets of brigadier- and major-general of volunteers on 13 March, 1865. In 1866-'7 he was corporation attorney of the city of New York, and in 1868-'9 he was U. S. minister to Paraguay. In 1872 he was appointed receiver of taxes in New York city, which office he held until 1885, when he became U. S. marshal of the southern district of New York. Gen. McMahon received the degree of LL. D. from St. John's college in 1866. During 1886-'7 he was president of the Society of the Army of the Potomac. His brother, JOHN EUGENE, b. in Waterford, Ireland, in 1834, d. in Buffalo, N. Y., in May, 1863, and another brother, JAMES POWER, b. in Waterford, Ireland, in 1836, killed at the battle of Cold Harbor, in June, 1864, each had command of the 164th New York volunteers. They had previously graduated from St. John's college, and were practising lawyers when the civil war began.

**MACMASTER, Donald**, Canadian member of parliament, b. in Glengarry, 3 Sept., 1846. He was graduated at McGill university as bachelor of civil law in 1871, admitted to the bar of Quebec in that year, and to that of Ontario in 1882, when he also became Queen's counsel. He represented Glengarry in the Ontario parliament from 1879 till he resigned in May, 1882, to become a candidate for the Dominion parliament, to which he was elected for the same constituency. He has gained reputation as an eloquent speaker.

**McMASTER, Gilbert**, clergyman, b. in the parish of Saintfield, Ireland, 18 Feb., 1778; d. in New Albany, Ind., 15 March, 1854. He emigrated with his parents to the United States in 1791, studied two years at Jefferson college, Pa., and was licensed to practise medicine in 1805, but abandoned it for theology, and in 1807 was licensed to preach, being ordained the next year as pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian church of Duaneburg, N. Y. He officiated there until 1840, when he accepted a call from the church in Princeton, Ind., which he resigned, on account of the failure of his health, in 1846. Union gave him the degree of D. D. in 1828. His works include "An Essay in

Defence of Some Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity" (Utica, N. Y., 1815); "The Shorter Catechism Analyzed" (1815); "An Apology for the Book of Psalms" (1818); and the "Moral Character of Civil Government" (1832).—His son, **ERASMUS DARWIN**, clergyman, b. in Mercer, Pa., 4 Feb., 1806; d. in Chicago, Ill., 11 Sept., 1866, was graduated at Union in 1827, studied theology under his father, and in 1831 was ordained pastor of the Presbyterian church in Ballston, N. Y. He became president of South Hanover college, Ind., in 1838, but resigned in 1845 to accept the presidency of Miami university. After four years' service in that institution he was made professor of systematic theology in New Albany theological seminary, and from January, 1866, till his death, a few months afterward, occupied the same chair in the Theological seminary of the northwest, Chicago, Ill. Dr. McMaster exercised an almost unbounded influence over the students with whom he was connected. Union gave him the degree of D. D. in 1841.—Another son, **JAMES ALPHONSUS**, journalist, b. in Duaneburg, Schenectady co., N. Y., 1 April, 1820; d. in Brooklyn, N. Y., 29 Dec., 1886, entered Union college, but left without being graduated, began the study of law, and became a private tutor. In 1845 he united with the Roman Catholic church, and soon afterward went to Belgium, where he entered a Redemptorist novitiate for "reflection and study to decide his vocation." His own inclination at that time tended toward the priesthood, but his confessor commanded him to "enter the world and become a Catholic journalist." He returned to the United States, bought in 1848 the "Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register," and for nearly forty years was regarded as the chief Roman Catholic journalist in this country. In 1861 he was arrested and confined in Fort Lafayette for his uncompromising strictures upon the war measures of President Lincoln, and his paper was suppressed. At the end of eleven months he was released, and the publication of the "Freeman's Journal" was resumed, 19 April, 1862. Although a life-long Democrat, he bitterly opposed the candidacy of Samuel J. Tilden, and, in spite of his devotion to his church, he did not spare its highest dignitaries. Much of his violent language during the last ten years of his life was attributed to chronic disease.

**McMASTER, Guy Humphrey**, poet, b. in Clyde, N. Y., 31 Jan., 1829; d. in Bath, Steuben co., N. Y., 13 Sept., 1887. He was graduated at Hamilton college in 1847, with the reputation of being the most brilliant student that the college had ever known. At nineteen years of age he wrote "Carmen Bellicosum," better known as "The Old Continentals," which was published in the "Knickerbocker Magazine," and at once attained popularity. In his youth he also contributed to the "Whig Review" and "Putnam's Monthly," and published a "History of Steuben County, N. Y." (Bath, 1849). He afterward abandoned literature for law, and contributed to the press only at intervals. He edited the "Steuben Courier" in 1855, again in 1876, and in 1877, while he was abroad, he contributed to its columns a series of articles called "Other Side Letters," that were widely copied. His best-known poems besides "Carmen Bellicosum" are a "Dream of Thanksgiving Eve" (1864); "The Commanders," a poem delivered at the Newton Sullivan centennial celebration, which is included in "Gen. Sullivan's Indian Expedition" (New York, 1887); and "The Professor's Guest Chamber" (1880). He was admitted to the bar of Steuben county in 1852, and practised until 1863.



Erasmus D. McMaster A.B. 1827



Erasmus D. McMaster<sup>1827</sup><sub>F.B.</sub>